

know about SNAP and what the Agriculture Committee has discovered during our thorough review of the program; and that is, that current benefits averaging only a \$1.40 per person per meal are not enough to cover the cost of a healthy diet.

Drs. Mulik and Haynes-Maslow set out to explore how much it costs families to follow the MyPlate dietary guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and then estimated the additional resources families on SNAP would need to follow these recommendations for a healthy diet.

They discovered that a family of four with two adults and two children between the ages of 8 and 17 needed between \$1,109 and \$1,249 a month to follow USDA's recommendations for a healthy diet, including the time to prepare nutritious meals. The research found this type of family, a family of four with two older kids, would need an additional \$627 per month to eat a nutritious diet.

Overall, the research determined that current SNAP benefits only cover about 43 to 60 percent of the food budget needed to follow MyPlate recommendations. These findings underscore the need for Congress to protect SNAP and further expand access to nutritious food by increasing benefits. This is especially important as we continue to learn more about the negative health impacts exacerbated by hunger and a lack of access to nutritious food.

Unfortunately, some in this House have turned efforts to help our constituents put food on their table when times are tough into an ideological crusade and, quite frankly, it is unconscionable. Food ought to be a fundamental right for every single person.

Republicans on the House Agriculture Committee and in the Republican leadership of this House advanced a farm bill last month that would have done irreparable harm to our anti-hunger safety net. It relied on negative stereotypes and incorrect assumptions about the hardworking American families who rely on modest SNAP benefits. It would have slashed SNAP by \$23 billion, which would cause millions of Americans to see their benefits reduced or eliminated entirely.

And not only did this terrible bill single out those vulnerable adults who are having a difficult time finding stable employment, it also targeted working families, older adults, and children.

In the United States of America, the richest country in the history of the world, no person should go to bed hungry or wondering where his or her next meal is coming from. This Congress ought to be focused on helping our constituents with a hand up when times are tough, instead of demonizing the poor and ignoring their struggles.

Now, I am encouraged that the Senate Agriculture Committee is marking up a bipartisan farm bill today that protects SNAP from harmful cuts and makes investments in the program to help increase access to healthy foods.

My Republican friends in the House should follow their example.

As we continue through this year's farm bill process, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reject cuts to SNAP benefits and oppose efforts to reduce access to this critical food assistance program.

As research has long confirmed, SNAP helps to reduce food insecurity, promote access to nutritious foods, and improve health. We know that SNAP benefits must be increased to cover the costs associated with a nutritious diet. I encourage my colleagues to consider this important new information and to join me in working to end hunger now.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM ALLEN KENDRICK, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. ABRAHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of William Allen Kendrick, Jr., a Marine and lifelong resident of Jena, Louisiana, who died tragically on May 24.

Allen led a life driven by passion, patriotism, and faith, values he lived and expressed through music. He served as a bandsman in the Marine Corps for 8 years and brought his enthusiasm for music and theater back to civilian life in his hometown of Jena, a small rural community that I have the privilege to represent in my district.

Allen first discovered his love of music at Nolley Memorial United Methodist Church when he joined the Nolley group known as the Nolley Notables as a young student. As an adult, he created the Nolley Memorial UMC Grace Notes Choir and doubled the size of the LaSalle Parish Community Choir after becoming its director.

Not surprisingly, Allen incorporated his love for God and country in his music, and it showed when he performed the most notable arrangements during Independence Day, Memorial Day, and other veterans events.

He was also a member of the Jena Community Theater Group called Acting Up, and a former band director at Jena High School.

Allen shared a quote on his Facebook page that said: "Music is not what I do. It's who I am." He lived that life every day, and all of us who heard his music are better for it.

I join all those who have been blessed by Allen's music, and I mourn his passing, as does the community. It will be hard not to think of him the next time I attend a service in Jena, though I know that his legacy and his patriotism will forever be a special part of Jena and Louisiana and, hopefully, the Nation.

STOP PROSECUTING ASYLUM SEEKERS AND SEPARATING FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, last week a group of about a dozen of us wrote a letter to the head of the Department of Homeland Security, Health and Human Services, and the Attorney General. We demanded that the Trump administration cease its practice of prosecuting asylum seekers, to reunite the children they separated from their families, and to allow Members of Congress to visit the facilities where the children are being held.

We gave these three Trump administration Cabinet Secretaries a deadline to get back to us, and so far we have heard nothing, not a peep. So now we are trying to figure out how to make it clear to the Trump administration that agencies taking children from the arms of moms and dads is absolutely 100 percent unacceptable to us and most Americans.

Let's look at what is going on here. In order to get more of you on that side of the aisle elected or re-elected, the President and his henchmen have devised an election-year strategy to be as mean and nasty as possible to asylum seekers, to immigrants, refugees, and Latinos in general.

The President, and the Attorney General, and others have said that this is a national security strategy, and that our national security depends on taking toddlers, infants, and children, most of whom are under the age of 12, away from their parents.

Come on, really? How does jailing a scared, frightened, terrorized 8 year old who barely escaped with her life from Central America, make any of us safer?

Well, it doesn't. The only person who might be safer because an 8-year-old child is in jail is a Member of the House running for re-election on a get-tough-on-immigration platform.

And it isn't like they are taking these children from their parents and putting them on the other side of the jail or the other side of the for-profit detention center. No, they are taking the toddler, the infant, the 8 or 9 year old and taking them to a government facility somewhere else, maybe in New York, Chicago, Seattle, thousands of miles away.

And we are hearing the most horrific stories. Parents who have had their children taken from them have committed suicide.

Imagine how you would feel if you had to walk from El Salvador to Texas to save the life of your son or daughter, only to wind up in detention. Now, imagine that a man in a uniform comes up to you and says, hey, we are going to take your child for a bath. We are going to take them to see the doctor. And then hours go by and you realize they are gone, maybe forever. Can you imagine?

Can you sit quietly and do nothing when that is how your tax dollars are being spent?

We are scarring these children for the rest of their lives. We know this. Taking children from their families and institutionalizing them at a young age